

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 157707
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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:L E POPE

APPROVED BY

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY 3704

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 157707

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 7849 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO AMMAN
CAIRO DAMASCUS LONDON PARIS JERUSALEM JUN 21.

QUOTE: C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 7849

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: -

SUBJ: LEBANESE-ISRAELI NAVAL ENCOUNTER

REF. STATE 156572

1. INF INTELLIGENCE SPOKESMAN

TOLD US TODAY THAT ISRAELI UNIT INVOLVED IN 18 JUN
INCIDENT WITH LEBANON COAST GUARD DID NOT FIRE ON
THE LEBANESE SHIP BUT DID FIRE ON THE SUSPECTED
CONTRABAND SHIP DIMITRIA ONE (SIC) IN ORDER TO STOP HER.

2. IN A BRIEFING REQUESTED BY ALUSNA IN RESPONSE TO REF
INF SPOKESMAN STATED THE DIMITRIA ONE PROCEEDED SOUTHERLY OFF
THE LEBANON COAST UNTIL SHE REACHED QUOTE AN AREA
CLOSE TO THE NORTHERN BORDER OF ISRAEL UNQUOTE.
WHEN SHE TURNED EAST SHE WAS FIRED UPON AND SEARCHED
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BY INF DABUR PB WHICH WAS IN COMMUNICATION WITH INF
HEADQUARTERS. UPON ASCERTAINING THE CARGO WAS WHISKEY
AND OTHER CONTRABAND THE DIMITRIA WAS RELEASED. THE
INF SPOKESMAN STATED THE LEBANON COAST GUARD BOAT
ARRIVED ON THE SCENE, BUT WAS NOT FIRED UPON.

3. COMMENT: AALUSNA QUESTIONED INF SPOKESMAN TO

DETERMINE ISRAEL'S CLAIM TO WATERS OFF LEBANON. HIS
REPLY WAS LINKED TO A TELEVISION SPEECH BY THE COMMANDER
ISRAEL NAVY, RADM BARKAI, WHO SAID ISRAEL WOULD PROTECT
HER SEA BORDERS TO INCLUDE SEARCHING SUPICIOUS SHIPS
IN AREAS NEAR HER BORDERS. HE REFUSED TO ELABORATE ON
SPECIFIC DISTANCES, IMPLYING THAT SUCH DECISIONS WOULD
REMAIN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COMMANDER ISRAEL
NAVY. LEWIS
UNQUOTE VANCE

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